



Commission on Equity and Opportunity

18-20 Trinity Street • Suite 202 • Hartford, CT 06106 • (860) 240-1424 (o) • 860-240-1476 (f)
www.cga.ct.gov/ceo

February 22, 2017

Senator Paul Formica
Senator Catherine Osten
Representative Toni E. Walker
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 2700
Hartford CT, 06106

Testimony In Opposition to H.B. 7027, An Act Concerning the Governor's Budget
Recommendations for Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

Dear Senators Formica and Osten, Representative Walker, and honorable members of the
Appropriations Committee,

My name is Mui Mui Hin-McCormick, I am a Senior Special Projects Coordinator with the
Commission on Equity and Opportunity . I also serve on multiple boards and coalitions; in
particular the North Central Regional Mental Health Board and am Chair of the Catchment
Area Council (CAC) 23. CAC's offer a common ground for consumers, family members, and
providers to work together in support of their communities. On behalf of the Commission
on Equity and Opportunity and the North Central Regional Mental Health Board I am
submitting testimony opposing H.B. No. 7027 regarding the proposed DMHAS cuts that
would eliminate the Regional Mental Health Boards (RMHB).

Similar to other agencies, these RMHBs have limited funding and resources; welcoming
opportunities to collaborate with agencies and communities. These agencies also share
common goals of addressing disparities in underserved communities.

For over 40 years RMHBs have evaluated hundreds of programs, assessed the needs of the
community, been the voice for the community and influenced the mental health and
addictions service system continuously. The RMHBs produce results and touch thousands

of lives on a low budget. RMHBs make a difference for individuals, families, and systems. The RMHBs represent an impressive return on investment as the RMHBs helps bring in \$23 million in federal funding for mental health and addiction services. The \$1,205,025 in state funding to the eighteen agencies (five RMHBs and 13 Regional Substance Abuse Action Councils) should not be sacrificed as these agencies have proven their worth in the community.

NCRMHB is one of five regional mental health boards established by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1974 to study local needs, evaluate state funded mental health programs and make recommendations to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), local providers, and government officials for improved and/or expanded services. NCRMHB seeks to involve consumers of behavioral health services (local citizens living with mental health or substance use disorders, family members, and others who know and care about them) in its review, evaluation, and advocacy activities.

In my previous work as a clinical director of a community based outpatient program, I know firsthand about the existing barriers providers are challenged with on a daily basis. There is so much more work that needs to be done in all of our diverse communities when it comes to mental health and addiction issues. The work can't be done with the restricted funding and lack of resources. This is why, the RMHBs are valuable in our communities as they are not only a resource but an advocate for those that are not able to advocate for themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. I hope you strongly consider reinstating funds for the Regional Mental Health Boards as they are critical supporters of our diverse communities; focused on improving the quality of life for all of our Connecticut residents, valuing the skills and experience of each person.

Sincerely,

Mui Mui Hin-McCormick

Mui Mui Hin-McCormick
Senior Special Projects Coordinator
Commission on Equity and Opportunity